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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSUL 000042

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SUBJECT: NINEWA: IRAQI ISLAMIC PARTY ON SECURITY

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CLASSIFIED BY: Cameron Munter, PRT Leader, Provincial
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REASON: 1.4 (a), (b), (d)

SUMMARY AND COMMENT

¶1. (C) Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP) leaders in Ninewa want a more representative Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and a reduced role of Coalition Forces (CF). They claim the Kurds are meddling with security and politics in the province. IIP reps believe they should play a larger role with helping CF and ISF on cases involving imams and religious leaders. They claim they can help CF "win hearts and minds" by bringing suspected terrorists to CF and ISF for questioning, rather than have CF and ISF conduct nighttime raids on houses. Even if the IIP's aims are altruistic, we are not sure how effective the party could be on this issue given the fractured nature of Sunni Arab political and tribal allegiances in Ninewa. End Summary and Comment.

¶2. (SBU) MNF-N joined by PRT Leader and PolOff met with Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP) Ninewa Director Dr. Mohammed Shaker Al Ghanam, Ninewa Deputy and Political Director Younis Hashim, provincial councilmembers Momtaz Mahmood Al Arajy and Hassan, and Leadership Officer Faris Younis at IIP headquarters in Mosul on April 1.

CAUSES OF SECURITY PROBLEMS

¶3. (C) IIP reps believe different actors in and outside of Iraq perpetrate terrorism in Ninewa. The view from the local IIP has been consistent over the past few months, especially when fingering Iraq's neighbors for problems in Iraq. Members of the IIP said they believed "Tekfiri" ("foreigners") kept interfering with affairs in Mosul, since Moslawis were truly a peaceful people that had lived together for thousands of years. Ninewa director Al Ghanam accused Iran of playing a large role with terrorist activity in Iraq, and indirectly implicated the Kurds with trying to manipulate politics in the province.

MORE REPRESENTATIVE SECURITY FORCES NEEDED

14. (C) Al Ghanam thanked Coalition Forces (CF) for helping secure the city and province, but also requested more CF and USG assistance to make the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) more representative. "The police and army should be made up of people from the city," claimed Al Ghanam. He believed the public needed to personally care for Mosul's security or conditions would not improve. Al Ghanam said all ethnic groups in Ninewa should be represented proportionally in the ISF. Only then, he cautioned, would the people of the province fully respect ISF. It was tough for the people to support the police in predominantly Sunni Tal Afar, for example, when he claimed the force was "mostly Shia." And many members of the Iraqi Army (IA) forces stationed in eastern Mosul were Kurds from outside of Ninewa, said Hashim. Hashim claimed that the IIP sent a letter several years ago to the Ministry of Interior (MOI) in Baghdad with a list of potential Sunni candidates for the ISF, but that no response was ever received. Another important aspect, according to Al Ghanam, was to better educate the public on reporting insurgents and terrorist activities. The IIP, on the other hand, had been doing its part by "going public" to get their followers to respect the police and to participate in the democratic process.

WINNING HEARTS AND MINDS

15. (C) Al Ghanam claimed that CF could do more to win the hearts and minds of the populace in Mosul. Speaking on the recent arrest of a local imam, Al Ghanam suggested that IIP play a larger role with helping CF and ISF when conducting counterinsurgency efforts. He requested CF and ISF contact the party directly when receiving intelligence information implicating a religious scholar or imam. The IIP would bring the suspect in to ISF and CF for questioning, he said. Al Ghanam claimed the public in Mosul was becoming displeased with nighttime raids on houses, especially when religious leaders or "innocent" people were arrested. The process he described would

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place less attention on the negative aspects of raids and arrests and help concentrate efforts on battling terrorism. Al Ghanam also said the IIP would not stand in the way of CF and ISF work to locate and arrest "known terrorists," however. He asked that CF reduce the number of armored vehicles in Mosul, and leave patrolling up to the ISF. Al Arajy claimed poor security in Ninewa was caused by the large presence of CF vehicles in the city and an "imbalance of power" in the ISF. Al Ghanam also called for more recruiting of ISF serving the former regime, since it would provide jobs and create stability in the area.

PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS AND THE KURDS

16. (C) Regarding provincial elections slated for later this year, Al Ghanam said: security was "critical" especially for protecting the integrity of the vote. Using Kurdish or Shia forces to provide security at the polls would only make the situation worse and allow for foul play, he said. Even local governments were being run by the Kurds, said Al Ghanam, especially in places like Sinjar, and Zumar in the west. He claimed IIP was seeing tensions build in these and other areas under Kurdish control, which was causing "gaps" for outside terrorists to enter. Al Arajy said local governments in western Ninewa were pleased with the support they were receiving from the KRG, for example, but that the KRG was only "trying to buy votes."

COMMENT

17. (C) The views shared by the IIP reps in Ninewa are consistent: the creation of more representative security forces,

the reduction of Coalition Forces, and tensions with the Kurds. Fingering of Iran as the root of all security problems in Mosul, and Iraq, is a constant theme as well but does little to address allegations of Iraqi and neighboring Arab government involvement in Iraq's tenuous security situation. There is a one-sided view, blaming others for the insurgency. Further, the fractured nature of Sunni politics here makes us skeptical of the IIP's ability to represent an overall "Sunni" position.

MUNTER